

Tom Browne, "Phil May's" Successor, Sketches New York Types for THE EVENING WORLD.



THE SNAKE-CHARMER.
A SKETCH ON 5TH AVENUE.

A WONDERFUL DETECTIVE STORY.

By Albert Payson Terhune

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SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.
Cyril Ballard, a young New Yorker, is killed during a murder at Paul Craddock's apartment in Carnegie Hall. Several apparently supernatural events attend his death. Poison tablets, also, are found in his pocket, but the autopsy reveals no trace of poison in the system. As Gresham and Beckwith, two detectives, are discussing the case, they are joined by a third detective, the Englishman, whom Beckwith introduces to Gresham as the Englishman. The Englishman undertakes to solve the Ballard mystery.

The Englishman's suspicions at length fall on Royce Ballard, the murderer's man's brother. He has reason to believe that Royce carries a certain document bearing on the crime, and intends to secure it. Disguised, he waylays Royce late at night in the door of the latter's laboratory, hears him utter the contents of his pockets and boards an uptown cab. Royce and the police give chase.

CHAPTER IX.

A Trolley-Car Race.

HERE was a dilemma. For the moment the Englishman was comparatively safe. His ruse of capturing the car, finding it devoid of passengers and of securing the motor-man's co-operation—a co-operation as hearty as it was totally unconscious—had enabled him to leave his pursuers far in the rear. He half smiled as he pictured the furious, profane group—the policemen, the muddy conductor, Royce Ballard and the chance pedestrians—trotting along on foot in pursuit of a trolley car that was going at the rate of almost twenty miles an hour.

But the danger ahead was none the less grave. The policemen had doubtless telephoned upwards to have the car stopped. Officers were probably already waiting somewhere along the track in front. Then, too, the Englishman's car was rapidly gaining on the car in front of it. Long before Grace Church could be reached they must force slacken speed, even supposing that no vehicle from some side street should sooner obstruct rapid progress.

At Fourteenth street, at furthest, the police must stop them. Grand street was already passed, the car almost grazing the noses of a pair of horses drawing a westbound blue car. Chancing to glance backward toward the horse-car driver, whose scintillant profanity was still splitting the night, the Englishman's gaze became fixed and rigid.

Distant, but whistling forward at top speed, a northbound trolley car was casting long in their wake. With eyes phenomenally far-sighted by nature, and whose keenness had been further trained by a lifetime of observation, the Englishman could see in the lighted interior of the pursuing car three blue-coated policemen.

He understood the whole situation at once. His pursuers had taken a leaf out of his own book, had seized and impressed into service the first trolley car that had followed the one taken by the Englishman and were ordering the motor-man "in the name of the law" to crowd on all power in the hope of overhauling their prey.

The Englishman was thus menaced from behind and ahead. At any moment now the chase might end. A related pedestrian hailed him at a distance. "Take the next car!" shouted the conductor with a shrill whistle at the blue car, and the chase continued.

THE FATAL CHORD;

or, the Baffling Mystery of the Carnegie Hall Murder.

As a look at the next illuminated corner sign as it flashed by showed the fugitive he had reached Spring street.

The pursuers were still too far distant for the average eye to detect the Englishman's figure on the rear platform of the car they were chasing. But (probably through some lingering reluctance on the part of the Englishman's motor-man to risk his car's mechanism by a too-excessive fracture of the speed ordinance) the second car was gradually creeping closer.

On whistled the mad race between black and silent walls, rows of dark windows gazing down like sightless eyes on the sport. The street, which by daylight forms the pulsating, plethoric artery of traffic for one of the greatest cities on earth, slept silent, inert, almost deserted at this late hour.

"The next street's Bleeker," thought the Englishman nervously. "There's no more time to be wasted." He pulled the bell.

Reluctantly the motor-man applied the brakes. The portion of the block where they now were was comparatively dark. As the speed slackened the Englishman jerked the bell twice, and as he did so he tossed the borrowed cap to the platform, resumed his own hat and sprang lightly to the ground.

The motor-man put on speed once more, and the conductorless car sped on up Broadway.

As the second car rushed on a half minute later a man strolling unsteadily into Broadway from the eastern part of Bleeker street paused in drunken wonder to watch the unusual speed, and incidentally to take note of its passengers. These consisted of three policemen, one of them covered with similarly disfigured, and a well-dressed man holding a smashed hat.

"I wonder if it's worth while waiting any longer for the Englishman?" remarked Gresham, yawning and dolefully snuffing the case of his big watch. "When he tipped us off that this was the night and said we might wait here for the case of his big watch."

"I'll be worth waiting for," answered Beckwith. "For one time it's worth waiting for. 'I'll be worth waiting for' is a new one on me."

"I know it," said Beckwith calmly. "I just got back that \$10 by betting on it."

"What makes you so confident?" "Any man may fall once. But that Englishman isn't. He's got a record of scores performance of a failure. He'll go through Royce Ballard's clothes this time or he'll never come back alive."

what are you going to do with the cash and the watch?"

"I just brought them along to avert Ballard's suspicion from my real object," replied the Englishman. "I'm going to put them up in a neat little package and send them back to Ballard with a note to the effect that I am the 'gentleman burglar' Raffles, whose antics have been exploited in the papers of late. I'll tell him I stole his valuables just for amusement and that I here-with return them intact. The papers will have another pretty Raffles mystery to amuse them."

"How the real 'gentleman burglar' whoever he is, will swear when he reads about it!" chuckled Beckwith, appreciatively.

"Gentleman burglar!" sneered Gresham. "How I hate that term. It would be as sensible to speak of an 'honest shoplifter' or a 'black-broked alibi.' Whenever a thief doesn't murder his victim or burn down the house or eat one of the children, he's heralded as a 'gentleman burglar.' Say, let's get at those papers, now."

Deftly, swiftly, with speed born of long experience, the trio attacked the little pile of papers among which they believed hid the key to the Ballard murder mystery. The chemical formula for the poison in the tablets, hazardously proceeded to read, had no direct bearing on the murder.

"This sounds interesting," said Gresham, looking up from one of the letters he was reading. "The signature's torn off. But the letter means something. Listen: 'Dear Mr. Ballard: You are sure they are just what you need. I cannot afford to let you go without them. Your brother will not. I have a hunch that all this is. Signature's torn off.'"

"No date at the top?" "Yes, March 3." "The very morning before Cyril Ballard was killed," cried Beckwith. "The Englishman had already snatched the mutilated note from Gresham's hand and was scanning it eagerly through his pocket microscope.

"Paper of German make," he muttered, thinking aloud. "Writer a German of artistic temperament. Gentle by nature, but of sudden anger if slighted or wronged. Highly sensitive. Abnormally developed muscles in forearm and hand. Pianist, probably. Professional. Wait! scanning a thumb-mark so faint as to be invisible to the

GRAYLESS LABOR. Mrs. Gray-Lucy, I hope you didn't forget to wash the fish thoroughly before you put it in to bake. Lucy-Mah lan! wat fur Ah gwine wash a fish dat's bin a-livin in de water all his life?—Philadelphia Test-ger.

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